

How should I care for a cloth face covering?

Washing your cloth face covering frequently, ideally after each use, or at least daily is strongly recommended. Use a bag or bin to store cloth face coverings until they can be laundered with detergent and hot water and dried on a hot cycle. If you must re-wear your cloth face covering before washing, wash your hands immediately after putting it back on or adjusting the mask, and avoid touching your face. Discard cloth face coverings that:

- Have stretched out or damaged ties or straps
- No longer cover the mouth and nose
- Don't stay on the face
- Have any rips or holes in the fabric

When should I wear a cloth face covering?

You are required to wear a face covering in public settings, including in grocery stores, convenience stores, pharmacies, doctor's offices, and on public transportation. Wearing a cloth face covering does not eliminate the need to physically distance yourself from others. If you are sick, you should wear a cloth face covering, over your nose and mouth if you must be around other people – even while at home.

How effectively do cloth face coverings prevent the spread of COVID-19?

The primary role of cloth face coverings are to reduce the release of infectious particles into the air when someone speaks, coughs, or sneezes, including someone who has COVID-19 but may not show symptoms. **Cloth face coverings are not a substitute for washing hands, physical distancing while performing essential activities, and staying home, but they may be helpful when combined with these actions.**

What is a cloth face covering?

A cloth face covering is a material that covers the nose and mouth. It can be secured to the head with ties or straps or simply wrapped around the lower face. It can be made of a variety of materials, such as cotton, silk, or linen. Research has shown that certain more densely-woven fabrics may be more effective. A cloth face covering may be factory-made or sewn by hand, or can be improvised from household items such as scarfs, T-shirts, sweatshirts, or towels.